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Food and Nutrition

April 1976 • Volume 6 • Number 2



School Lunch and the Athlete

A Bicentennial Pennant for Bryan City

Ms. Carr has been in the National School Lunch Program for 24 of its almost 30 years. Dr. King has been an educator since 1956 and superintendent of Bryan school district for the past 3 years. The following is an interview with Ms. Carr and Dr. King.

Dr. King: The American School Food Service Association published a set of criteria with an application. To win, we had to qualify two of three ways: use the Bicentennial Heritage Menu, invite the community to lunch during National School Lunch Week, or increase student participation in the National School Lunch Program over the previous year. We did all three.

Ms. Carr: No. Not really. We just formalized what we had been doing all the time. The first thing we did was to notify each student that we were going to take part in the bicentennial. We're used to having the public in for lunch. We provide meals for the elderly, and a lot of other groups come to lunch each month—the Adult Farmers, American Field Service, our Parent-Teachers Organization, and this past spring we had 1,000 Rotarians from this district of Ohio. Everyone pays for his own meal, of course. For the bicentennial project, the ASFSA provided the menus for us to prepare, so that part was easy. And we're always working to boost participation.

Ms. Carr: National School Lunch Week went very well. The highest attendance for one day was 81 guests, but for the week, we had 280 people. Among them were the mayor, some councilmen, police and firemen.

And the students did enjoy it. They and the kitchen staff decorated the cafeteria. And the elementary students made posters to decorate their lunchrooms. The high school students served the teachers and staff, then sat down with their parents and the other guests. Many students mingled with the guests.

Ms. Carr: Well, we let the students know about it, and they helped with the decorations, and they helped to get their parents interested. We advertised it through our community facilities—the radio, newspaper—and we put a poster in the local bank’s window . . . I was interviewed several times about the National School Lunch Program on “Sounding Board,” a local radio program. Then we had to order the necessary food, figure how many additional people were coming. The parents had to RSVP and tell us which of our five schools they’d go to. Our van had to deliver the additional meals to the other schools. We cook all the meals for the three elementary schools and the junior high school at our high school kitchen. The custodians helped a lot, too. You need everyone’s cooperation to run an operation like this properly.

Ms. Carr: It makes our youngsters aware that they have a heritage to be proud of. I see a greater awareness of the flag and a greater interest developing in the community and in government. Students are taking a closer look at government and they think they can contribute. Williams County has an interesting history, and we're bringing that into our bicentennial plans. We're going to continue the Heritage meals throughout the year

- This winning recipe for effective food service was what helped win recognition for Grace Carr, cafeteria manager for Bryan City School District. With the backing of Dale King, superintendent, she and her staff were the first to receive a pennant given to schools participating in the Child Nutrition Bicentennial Project. Presentation of the pennant was broadcast from a student assembly of the District's five schools over live radio.

At the assembly, Dr. King was quick to give credit for their success in the National School Lunch Program to Ms. Carr, who in turn credited Dr. King with the program's acceptance. When finally identified at the presentation as the person responsible for winning the pennant, Ms. Carr

Dr. King: When the National School Lunch Program started, it was after the fact. The building was there and we were asked to put a lunch program in it. Now the kitchen is planned when the building is built. And there wasn't as much student involvement before as there is now. We often have elementary students helping to plan the Type A menu. ☆

Food Stamps in Vermont

Problems of transportation and communication challenge Vermont's food stamp staff. Through community support and a neighbor-to-neighbor approach, they've developed some interesting solutions.

By Catherine Tim Jensen



Vermonters have approached the challenge of food stamp outreach with Yankee ingenuity. The State's green mountains, and the independent spirit they inspire are not barriers to outreach because the State government has made a genuine commitment to food stamps.

Each January since his inauguration in 1972, Governor Thomas P. Salmon has proclaimed Food Stamp Week. He has personally made television and radio announcements urging eligible Vermont citizens to apply for food stamps.

Even more substantial evidence of the State's endorsement of the program was the appointment of Charles Perry as outreach coordinator in January 1974. A former newspaperman whose main interest is working with people, Mr. Perry has experience in programs for the aged and in welfare.

Mr. Perry felt from the outset that a broad base of organizational support would be needed. He began the outreach effort by holding orientation meetings with interested agencies. Newspaper and radio publicity added to the large attendance generated by a telephone and letter campaign. Representatives of service or-

ganizations, as well as sewing circles, craft guilds and other organizations not always reached by traditional service agencies responded to this publicity.

The orientation sessions were set up as 1- to 2-hour lectures followed by question and answer periods. In these meetings, participants talked about the food stamp program and analyzed the resources and the ability of each agency to engage directly in outreach.

The sessions led to intensive 1-day workshops focusing on the information required on the food stamp application. Workshop participants were primarily community workers, for example, visiting nurses employed by private home health agencies, who deal with prospective food stamp recipients. Mr. Perry notes that the nurses are in regular contact with many housebound and elderly Vermonters. After the outreach workshop, these nurses were able to assist their clients in determining their household compositions and economic situations, which must be clearly stated on food stamp applications, and later verified.

Workshop participants often identified barriers to participation and

discovered ways to overcome them by pooling resources. For example, getting food stamp recipients to issuing agents and shopping facilities are common problems in a rural State like Vermont. Workshop participants suggested a solution to this problem by coordinating the schedules of elderly food stamp recipients and the Senior Meals Program transportation systems.

In Grand Isle, a rural island in Lake Champlain, a Roman Catholic nun employed as a senior community aide by the regional office on aging acts as an authorized food stamp representative for approximately 25 senior citizens. She goes to the food stamp issuance center on a regular basis to purchase food stamps for her clients, using their authorization-to-purchase cards and the money they give her to meet their purchase requirements.

Getting food stamp recipients to stores to buy food is only part of the State's effort. An indication of the State's overall commitment to provide adequate nutrition to all Vermonters was the establishment of a Governor's commission on food in March 1975. The commission, composed of a group of citizens, food in-

dustry personnel and State officials, recommends ways to increase and diversify agricultural productivity. It has also explored the role of food stamps in meeting the State's nutrition needs.

Commission members took part in a food stamp outreach conference in Barre, Vermont, last October. It was the culmination of Mr. Perry's effort to bring together many groups concerned with providing adequate diets to low income families. The conference included churches, labor unions, agencies serving the aged, the extension service and other interested groups.

Conference members established a list of priorities; reaching senior citizens headed the list. The statistics they studied showed that of Vermont's 65,000 people over 60, only 2,900 were using food stamps in September 1975.

A second target group identified by Perry was the working poor. He explained that outreach workers stationed at two textile mills had identified some workers as eligible who were not receiving food stamps. Through union contracts and the union newspaper, eligible workers, usually those with large families, were encouraged to apply and told where certification offices were located. Mark Stechbart, representing the Vermont Labor Council, AFL-CIO, at the conference, pledged further cooperation.

Mr. Perry believes that the most successful way to reach people in Vermont is "neighbor to neighbor." Although he has a press background, he sees the media as a supplement to other, more personally oriented, efforts. He points out, for instance, that there are few television stations in the State. The mountainous terrain means that Vermonters often receive their news from stations in Maine, New York or New Hampshire.

To deal with this problem of communication, Charles Perry developed "outposting," which is described in detail below. It is a way to reach across and around Vermont's green mountains to those eligible for food stamps. Outposting has proven so successful that private groups now sponsor outposters by giving funds to the State that are earmarked for the outposter's salary. ☆

Neighbor-to-Neighbor

By Charles Perry

In the village of Chelsea, Vermont, population 450, a housewife leaves her home and walks down the street to apply for food stamps. An elderly widow living in an old farmhouse in the hills above Chelsea gets into a neighbor's car to be driven to the village where she will apply for stamps.

Chelsea does not have a regular food stamp office run by the Vermont Department of Social Welfare; in fact, the nearest office is 35 miles away in White River Junction. But every Friday morning Chelsea receives a regular visit from an "outpost" food stamp certification worker. This outpost worker, who regularly visits Chelsea and other small communities in the area, is an example of agencies and people working together to build an effective program.

The housewife previously had been unable to apply for food stamps because her husband took the family car to his job every day. The widow on the hill had been unable to find transportation to White River Junction and was afraid to visit the government office in the "big city."

The two women applied for food stamps at the Chelsea Human Service Center, which is run by a local group out of a small area in the local doctor's office. The two women took all the necessary verifications with them, thanks to the work of outreach workers who had previously outlined the application procedures. The outpost worker promptly interviewed each woman, explaining the food stamp program and giving them nutrition and shopping pamphlets. Within 15 days after visiting the center, each woman received notice that her application had been either approved or denied.

These people and many others just like them are being served by a food stamp worker from the White River Junction welfare office, thanks to a donation from the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ, and matching USDA funds. Offerings to the denomination's state-wide Neighbors in Need program provide the basis for the church support of this effort. Neighbors in Need is a na-

tional program of the United Church of Christ. The Vermont Conference retains 25 percent of the offerings for special programs.

Vermont has three outpost workers in different parts of the State. They began circuit riding in March 1975, and have brought the food stamp program to many rural old-timers who had found it difficult or impossible to travel to the nearest welfare office. Several hundred elderly Vermonters have signed up for food stamps through the outpost workers and the proportion of elderly signed up this way is higher than at the district offices. Of course, Vermonters of all ages, including working families, have been served by these outpost projects.

The Community Action Agencies in Bennington and Springfield have put up Emergency Food and Medical Service funds to support an outpost service. In all areas of the State where this outpost service exists, these agencies handle all the publicity and schedule the outpost worker's travels around the outlying towns. For example, the Bradford Area Community Action Agency makes sure that the church-sponsored outpost service responds to specific needs of the community, lines up outpost sites in churches, libraries, and even in a quiet corner of a general store; and does all the public information work involving posters, newspapers, and broadcast announcements. As part of this communication program, outreach workers in the community spread the word from person to person about the date, time, and place an outpost worker will be available.

Well publicized, regularly scheduled return visits by the outpost workers to these small rural communities have been effective. All the agencies working together on the outpost idea in Vermont have been watching the project's progress closely. The consensus is that the project works well for everyone; and while the statistical outcome of these efforts will make hardly a ripple on the national pond, they are effective and in the best tradition of a State with a history of neighborly cooperation. ☆

Lunch is a Learning Experience at River Hills

Lunch presents special difficulties--and special learning opportunities--for River Hills students. Even opening milk cartons becomes a daily lesson in eye-hand coordination.

For most visitors, the strongest memory of River Hills School is the spontaneous, open attitude of its students. Larry McDonald, who administers the school, calls it humaness.

The students are unusually friendly, eager to tell you their names, eager to hear yours. But within seconds, your name may sift through their minds like smoke.

These students are mentally retarded. With them, facts are usually just out of reach.

"The general population of our school has an I.Q. of 55 to no measurable I.Q.," said Mr. McDonald. The school accepts children 3 years old and over.

A short driveway leads to the one-level, brick school building which stands in a clearing banked on three sides by tall trees.

Through the front doors, visitors find a reception desk sharing the lobby with a huge teddy bear which sits on a box. The bear's bow tie hides a

speaker, and the receptionist talks through it to the children in a teddy bear voice.

Past the lobby, brightly lit, tiled halls link classrooms packed with objects of different sizes, shapes, textures, and materials that help children learn. A gingerale bottle, a soap box, goldfish, brushes, boxes, a slide projector, cassette player and television—everything can be handled, named, listened to or watched.

"Our main purpose is to give each student the opportunity to grow to his full potential," Mr. McDonald said, motioning to a classroom where young children were singing.

Way up in the apple tree (the children point up)

Two little apples smiled at me (they show two fingers)

I shook the tree as hard as I could (they pretend to shake a tree)

Down fell the apples (they point down)

M-m-m-m-they were good (they rub their stomachs).

For the students at River Hills everything is a learning experience—activities taken for granted in other schools are important projects. The school participates in the Special Milk Program. Students in each class take turns bringing milk and straws from the cafeteria to the classrooms.

"Even opening the cartons of milk gives eye-hand coordination," said one instructor, "and it's good exercise, strengthens those little muscles."

Teachers use all kinds of foods as teaching tools. Some classes grow potatoes and green beans in gardens outside the classrooms. Students watch the plants grow, then harvest and cook the food.

Preparing dishes shows students the difference between raw and cooked food. Cutting vegetables is a lesson in textures and densities.

"We examine a lot of exotic foods, too, like coconuts," a teacher said, "so students can see all the ways that raw food appears. For instance, they know where milk comes from, but they're surprised you can get beef from the same animal."

Parents can get involved with the food education by supplying ingredients for some of the dishes the students prepare. For birthdays, parents send a cake mix and other essentials and the students make a cake.

The older students make dishes from scratch, using recipes printed in large letters on flip charts. "We try to get students to learn recipes by rote, so they can make these dishes at home," a teacher commented. Cooking helps the memory, and cutting the finished product, like a pan of brownies, helps develop a student's manual dexterity.

Any part of the school can become a classroom. From time to time during the day, the halls fill with happy children, some going to another part of the building, others, like a group learning to use a push broom by sweeping dominoes, developing a practical skill.

The River Hills staff tries to help students learn to deal with everyday problems and situations. "We use our lunch program to teach work skills," Mr. McDonald said. "Eating habits, attitudes, social interaction—these are all basic to the curriculum."

As part of one course, "Traveling in the Community," students eat at restaurants in nearby Cedar Falls. If parents can't afford the lunch, the school has many friends in the community who will pay for it.

"Here at the school," the administrator said, "youngsters learn to chew and learn to handle a spoon, which is sometimes rubber so they won't hurt themselves. They learn table manners and table conversations."

Just before noon, kitchen sounds drift up the hall that leads to the cafeteria where Maxine Essman, the food service manager, calmly oversees lunch preparation and cleanup. Her staff includes two full-time assistants and 20 student helpers.

She divides the students into two groups of 10 helpers, and assigns each group to a lunch period. These helpers change monthly, but despite the training or re-training necessary every month, Ms. Essman's kitchen runs smoothly.

Ms. Essman and her staff have found that the demands of a program for special children differ from the needs of students in a regular school. For example the lunchroom uses a reversed serving line. The kitchen staff fills trays with food and student helpers hand them to students through a large serving window at a stainless steel counter.

"If we could, we'd run our lunch

program just the same as in a regular school, but we can't," said Ms. Essman. "For example, we don't serve a la carte menus. It would present too many decisions and would not provide a balanced meal."

The kids eat well. They like liver, spinach and broccoli. "We don't get much crabbing about meals, but if a student says he doesn't like something, we try to accommodate him," Ms. Essman continued. "Many students have dental and physical problems, so we serve foods that are easily chewed."

A typical menu at River Hills might include a baked potato, hash for the meat course, broccoli, muffins, butter, 2-percent milk, and the students' favorite—peaches—for dessert.

"Like any other kids, our students like peaches, potatoes with gravy, and hamburgers for lunch. You'd call them Sloppy Joes," the lunch manager said. "And we don't serve heavily spiced foods."

While the students have more digestive problems than typical students, Ms. Essman is still able to cook foods the way she normally would cook.

"A few kids with special diets bring their food from home," the lunch manager said. "I think all the students especially enjoy their meals here because all the teachers and aides eat with them."

In the cafeteria, the ratio of teachers to students appears to be almost one to one. Many children have to be helped to eat—helped to smash the potato, butter it, hold the fork. Some students must have their mouths wiped after almost every mouthful.

Occasionally, teachers have to wrestle the food to the student's mouth, even though the student is trying to get it there too. Mashed baked potatoes spill off the plate, sometimes on the floor, but everyone enjoys lunch, including the teachers.

The patience evident in the lunchroom is an extension of the easy-going cooperation in the kitchen.

Nineteen percent of River Hills' students are eligible for free or reduced price lunches, according to Mr. McDonald. In the beginning, parents paid in advance for monthly lunch tickets. Now the school keeps a daily record and bills parents at the end of the month. No child goes hun-

gry, however, even if parents can't afford to pay.

Even with the help some students need to eat, the River Hills' staff stresses independence and encourages students to do as much as they can for themselves.

"We're not just baby-sitting," said Ms. Essman. "We don't help them any more than we have to."

School hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. And everyone goes home after school, either to their own home or to a foster home.

"Twenty years ago, many of our students were excluded from school or allowed to attend for a while, then sent home to sit in a chair for the rest of their lives," said Mr. McDonald.

But the attitude toward helping the mentally retarded has changed in this country, explained the school administrator. Today, many mentally retarded people hold jobs.

"Twenty-two of our students work at Goodwill Industries," Mr. McDonald said. "They earn money and live at home. Four of them are even employed competitively."

"We don't tell taxpayers that with enough money, we can put large numbers of these students to work," he continued. "We simply tell them we can save the community significant money by training the students to help themselves."

The school is funded basically by the seven counties it serves. Mr. McDonald has been director of the school since 1966, and he helped the community plan and develop what is today's River Hills.

There are 294 students at River Hills, 40 classroom teachers—many of them specialists in speech, vision, or hearing—plus 24 full-salaried teaching aides. Classes average 10 students, with at least two instructors in each class.

The staff's interest and concern for their students is evident everywhere. Perhaps the attitude of the school is best summed up by a bit of blank verse hanging on the River Hills office wall—a hand-embroidered present from parents of a former student.

*I never would have chosen you,
But God has chosen me to care
for you.*

*I'd have chosen a perfect child
And I'd never have known the
joy you've brought to me." ☆*



Spreading the Word about BREAKFAST

By Dianne D. Jenkins



If you want to start your day wrong—forget breakfast. According to a report given to the American Medical Association, nearly 80 percent of American families do just that every day. And as a result, many American children don't receive all the nourishment they need—nourishment only breakfast provides. This means they may not be able to learn, work, or even play as well as children who do start their day with breakfast.

The link between breakfast and performance was firmly established by the Iowa Breakfast Study which revealed that children who skip breakfast are inclined to be listless and apathetic. By mid-morning, the peak teaching hours, their attention spans and ability to work and concentrate become limited.

And undernourishment isn't limited to children from lower-income families. The Ten-State Nutrition Study conducted by the Federal government revealed that children of every age and economic class were lacking in vitamins A, B, riboflavin, iron and thiamin—all of which are supplied by the breakfasts served under the School Breakfast Program.

Recognizing the importance of breakfast, Public Law 94-105 last fall authorized the School Breakfast Program on a permanent basis. To encourage schools to participate, USDA and State education agencies are conducting information campaigns to increase public awareness of the need for breakfast and the availability of the School Breakfast Program. "Energize with Breakfast" is the theme of the USDA campaign, which includes radio and television public service announcements and publications aimed at parents and community leaders as well as school administrators.

Some communities have already begun the work of spreading the word about the importance of breakfast, and they've come up with some interesting approaches.

Washington Ha

Stick up for breakfast and breakfast will stick up for you!

People saw it on posters, glanced at it on bumper stickers, and heard and read about it on radio, television and in the newspapers for almost 2 weeks.

"Stick Up for Breakfast" was the theme of an all-out educational campaign to reach 72,000 Washington, D.C., elementary schoolchildren, and their parents, with the facts about good nutrition and breakfast.

The week-long campaign, funded by a grant from the Kellogg Company, revolved around a teaching module that was developed co-operatively by Kellogg and the District of Columbia Department of Human Resources. Four thousand teaching packets, including posters, games, charts and coloring pages,

Teddy Roosevelt

Teddy Roosevelt is where? And he's holding a what??

A press conference. Heralded by "Hail to the Chief," armed with moustache and morning coat, he's holding press conferences with seventh and eighth grade student reporters in Florida schools as part of a program designed to teach nutrition and health as well as history.

The idea was developed by the Florida Department of Citrus as part of its campaign to increase public awareness of the need for good nutrition and the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

Since January 20, the old Rough Rider, played by a professional actor, has been crisscrossing the State holding as many as six press conferences in each school he visits.

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Washington Has a Breakfast Week.

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The week-long campaign, funded by a grant from the Kellogg Company, revolved around a teaching module that was developed cooperatively by Kellogg and the District of Columbia Department of Human Resources. Four thousand teaching packets, including posters, games, charts and coloring pages,

were distributed to all elementary teachers and their classes, and for a week, they focused on nutrition.

District of Columbia coordinators, however, also wanted to reach beyond the 136 elementary schools and hit home where attitudes are formed and reinforced. Four television spots were developed for the "Stick Up for Breakfast" campaign and were aired on local television stations as public service announcements.

To keep up the kids' enthusiasm, a nutrition song contest was held with the prize of a 2-day trip to Disney World for the two winning classes. And at the end of Stick Up for Breakfast Week, all 72,000 children in the school system had breakfast at school for free.

One goal of the program, according to coordinator Shirley Rougeau, was to increase the number of child-

ren taking advantage of the School Breakfast Program. Of the 72,000 children in the system, only about 20,000 eat school breakfast.

"There are a lot of reasons for this," explained Ms. Rougeau. "Sometimes parents and children just aren't aware that a breakfast program exists, or that they might qualify for free or reduced-price breakfast. And a lot of times, I think, both parents and children don't want to bother to get up early. And even if the kids are up early," she laughed, "you know they'd rather not be at school."

"What we tried to do with the program," explained Kellogg spokesman Harry Boesch, "is teach kids that they need to be able to make sound decisions for themselves about their bodies' nutritional needs. If their parents don't get them up in time to

eat breakfast at school, or at home, well maybe they should take responsibility for it themselves."

While results of tests to measure the effectiveness of the program are not finalized, only about 2,000 more students are now taking advantage of the breakfast program in the District of Columbia.

"In spite of that figure," said Ms. Rougeau, "I think the program was successful as a means of drawing attention to the problem of undernourishment and the very real need that we have to break the fast and eat in the morning. But," she continued, "I also realize that to achieve consistently higher participation in the School Breakfast Program and make a real change in our students behavioral patterns, we need an ongoing nutrition education program in the schools."

Teddy Roosevelt Rides Again!

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The idea was developed by the Florida Department of Citrus as part of its campaign to increase public awareness of the need for good nutrition and the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

Since January 20, the old Rough Rider, played by a professional actor, has been crisscrossing the State, holding as many as six press conferences in each school he visits.

Fifty or so student reporters attend each conference armed with questions developed with their teachers during the previous 2 weeks. Many of the questions are based on press kits supplied by the Department of Citrus and loaded with background on nutrition, health and history.

"We're getting a tremendous response to this program," said Paul Kreuger, coordinator for the Department. "I expect by the end of the year, we'll have sent Teddy into about 50 percent of the middle and junior high schools in Florida.

"Kids just have to learn with this project," he continued, "because we get them involved. They are the press, and he is the President, and no one is passive."

The seventh and eighth graders seem to have no trouble getting into

the spirit of things—one student came to a press conference in a morning suit of his own, decked out with spats and a big fake moustache.

The character of Roosevelt was chosen for this nutrition-health-history project because of his own personal interest in good nutrition and physical fitness. Roosevelt was sickly as a boy and suffered from a severe case of asthma. Trying to overcome his handicaps, he began his own program of nutrition and physical fitness when he was 12. During the conference, Teddy delivers a 10- to 15-minute monologue on his experiences as a boy and reflections on nutrition and health.

"It's dramatic and it's effective," said Kreuger, "and the kids can identify with what Teddy says because they're the same age he was when he

started his fitness program—which included 4 hours of exercise a day."

The press kit developed for the conference includes a variety of learning games, including "Name that Nutrient," as well as suggestions for other spin-off projects such as a newspaper based on stories written by student reporters.

Since 1973, the Florida Department of Citrus has been promoting the School Breakfast Program with publications aimed at parents, administrators and children. In addition, this year they are sponsoring a national poster contest and are awarding a \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond to the winner.

"If the Teddy project continues to be successful, we'll be interested in seeing if we can expand it into a national project," said Kreuger. ☆

School Lunch and the **ATHLETE**

By Tino Serrano and Melanie Watts

It's a crisp, clear day in Anytown, U.S.A. On the frozen ground of the football field, the Anytown Chargers face their crosstown adversaries. The ball is snapped, a young quarterback makes his move, and 22 brightly uniformed bodies explode in frenzied activity.

These young people's performance is the result of months of training, exercising, and special diets. But in many cases, especially among high school athletes, the meal they just ate to give them that extra spark may be letting them down when they need it most. Although nutrition is important to everyone's performance, and crucial to an athlete, it is an area of myth and sometimes harmful misinformation.

Food fallacies common

"More food fallacies are found in athletics than elsewhere," declared Edward T. Sheehan, Director of Food, Human Nutrition and Diet at the University of Arizona, in an address to 200 members of the Arizona School Food Service Association in February 1975. Home economist Julie Camp, who is currently teaching Little League coaches and other groups about the role food plays in athletics, joined Dr. Sheehan as a speaker at the Arizona meeting.

The speakers noted that the high school athlete, like many other teenagers, may be skipping breakfast, snacking instead of eating complete lunches, and trying to lose or gain weight through crash diets or food supplements.

Friends pass along their own eating hints, and looking for a credible source, the athlete turns to his coach, who often makes vague generalizations about diet. He may be told "stick to a sensible diet," "no snacking," or "no rich or fried foods."

Although athletic trainers are becoming better informed about nutrition, according to the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, a recent survey of coaches across the country revealed a great variety of recommendations based on their own athletic experiences. Some overlook nutrition as a factor in athletic conditioning, concentrating on workout and game skills. The result is that the athlete may be caught up in a whirlpool of contradictory information.

Conferees at the Arizona meeting discussed the role school food service can play in bringing order to this picture. They concluded that the National School Lunch Program can serve as a foundation to provide nutritious meals as well as an introduction to food groups and why each is important. Working with school athletic departments and administrators, they suggested, cafeteria managers can explore ways to meet the special food needs of team members. Used in conjunction with health courses, food service programs can be vehicles for dispelling the myths that have surrounded athletics for generations. The conferees discussed a number of common food fallacies young athletes should know and avoid.

One way to dispel these myths and get the facts to young athletes, suggested Julie Camp, is to get coaches involved. Diet recommendations from coaches are usually taken very seriously by team members.

"We've learned that youngsters won't listen to us if we tell them they should eat foods from the basic four food groups each day," she observed. "But if I explain to the coaches that the right foods will provide team members with plenty of energy, they listen. When the coach passes this information on, the child will go home and say, 'Hey, Mom, the coach says I must eat this for breakfast'."

Realizing this impact, many schools are offering courses on nutrition specifically for coaches. Master's program curriculums for physical education majors, tomorrow's coaches, include several courses on athletic diets. And a new face is appearing around the football field, the athletic trainer. With a strong educational background in basic metabolism, physiology, diet, and nutrition, these trainers are directly involved with athletes' training routines and game-time activities. They are becoming required personnel at more and more campuses as school administrators begin to see the results of the program.

School lunch can help

Many school administrators also recognize that the school lunch program can play a key role in the conditioning of an athlete. The Type A lunch provides about one-third of a

student's daily nutritional requirements. In producing a balanced meal for the non-athlete, the lunch program serves as a good foundation for the competitor as well, since both need the same balance of foods.

In most cases, the only modification necessary to precisely tailor a Type A lunch to athletic needs is an increase in the amounts served to compensate for the extra calories expended in exercise. According to Dr. Sheehan, figures vary dramatically between sports, but the high school athlete can burn up to twice the calories of his nonathletic classmate.

Some special considerations

USDA's Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Arizona recently published a pamphlet, "Food for Top Performance, a Reference for Athletic Directors." The pamphlet lists a number of special considerations for feeding athletes, such as:

- Keep in mind the psychological state of the competitor. Chances are he, or she, is going to have a nervous stomach and the last thing he needs is hard to digest food there.
- Liquid foods are a good idea because they cause no discomfort and pass quickly through the system.
- On game days it's a good idea for the team to eat early enough to digest their food before any exertion—usually 3 hours.
- To avoid any unnecessary bulk in the digestive tract, several small meals are better than a few very large ones.

Schools in some States have developed procedures to meet their teams' particular needs. These moves have increased participation in the lunch program and better prepared the teams involved.

Although good nutrition can't guarantee the school's team will beat the "crosstown Pirates," only with a good nutritional background will they be able to perform their best. Participants at the Arizona conference agreed that the school lunch program can contribute significantly to students' athletic performance. But, they concluded, prerequisites are an awareness of the special needs of the team and open communication between coaches and lunch program managers.

The following story tells how school food service staffs, in two different areas, worked with athletic departments to come up with an arrangement that's proved to be a winning combination for everyone.

At Central High School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and at all five high schools in Grand Junction, Colorado, cafeteria personnel are preparing pre-game meals for team members. Although each place has approached this arrangement a little differently, both are enjoying success in a number of ways.

Sit-down dinners become part of a winning tradition at Central

Making pre-game meals for the football team is an extra assignment the cafeteria staff at Central has been handling for the last 3 years. And if the team's record, which includes a State championship, is any indication, it's working well for everyone.

"It was the coach's idea," says Josie Kusch, CHS cafeteria manager, who recalls that the athletes used to eat at home or meet at a restaurant before a game. "This way, the kids get a good meal, with the right things, and they eat in familiar, comfortable surroundings."

And eating meals prepared in the school cafeteria costs less than eating out. The school's athletic department pays for everything, spending about \$230 during a season's time on meat and another \$70 each week for other food and labor.

"We prepare all the pre-game meals," says Ms. Kusch, "even when the games are scheduled out of town. We feed the students before they get on the bus."

The CHS team even invited one of its opponents to dinner last year. Visiting athletes and coaches enjoyed the standard menu with their hosts—roast beef, creamed potatoes, gravy, green beans, lettuce and tomato salad, iced tea and hot rolls.

"Our visitors really enjoyed it," she remembers, "but they were all amazed at how much our kids ate. That

New Orleans team never eats bread or potatoes before a game."

They may now, however, since CHS gridders won the contest that night.

This meal is served every Friday about 4 p.m., giving the players adequate time to digest their food.

Twenty hostesses, elected by the student body, help with the team meal each week. They decorate the cafeteria, set tables, serve the plates, and clear the tables.

Special glass plates and bowls, purchased by the athletic department just for the pre-game meal, are used every Friday evening.

"We all help prepare the meal," says Ms. Kusch, who reports that her 10-person staff is happy to work on this extra assignment. "We cook the roast on Thursday and the rest after lunch is over on Friday."

The staff takes turns working on pre-game meals so no one has to stay late more than four times a season. And the overtime, which lasts until about 6 p.m., is paid in full by the athletic department.

Once the meal is served, all doors are closed and the visitors leave. This allows the coaches and teams to discuss the upcoming game while eating their meals.

Ms. Kusch and her staff were under no pressure to accept this job 3 years ago. After all, they have a big enough job already, preparing 76 breakfasts and 837 lunches.

But, as they explain it, it's their chance to contribute to the school. And besides that, it's become part of a winning tradition.

Grand Junction teams get sack lunches for out-of-town games

Pre-game meals for the Grand Junction schools just got started this year when the coach was lamenting to a cafeteria staff member the high cost of feeding athletes on the road.

"We spend \$2.50 a person and, with the expansion of our girls' athletic program, we're going to spend a fortune on feeding these kids," the coach explained.

"We could fix a meal for a lot less than that," responded the food service employee. "Plus, we could give the kids a good meal, probably better than what they'd get in a restaurant."

Out of this session came the idea for sack lunches athletes could take with them on bus trips to out-of-town games. Now all Grand Junction athletic teams get pre-game meals.

The coach sends an order blank, specifying the number of meals needed, to the cafeteria manager at least 7 days before the scheduled trip. She then decides on a menu, although it usually follows the same pattern—a sandwich with 2 ounces of protein, carrot or celery sticks, a piece of fruit, dessert and milk.

"Variety has been a problem," explains Fran Nelson, school lunch consultant with the Colorado State Department of Education, who works with these schools on a regular basis. "They've used fried chicken in the sack lunches, when they've had time to prepare it. But this project is, after all, something they're doing in addition to their regular duties."

Each sack lunch costs the athletic department 80 cents, including food and labor costs. Extra sandwiches are 20 cents.

During January, 625 sack lunches were prepared at the five schools at a cost of \$343.75. If the same number of meals had been purchased in restaurants, the athletic department would have spent \$1,718.

There were some initial costs in setting up for the sack lunch arrangement. Coolers for the milk and trash cans were purchased for the buses.

The district food service staff feels that these sack lunches for the athletes will do great things for the lunch program, too.

"The kids really like these lunches," a representative explained, "so maybe they'll come back to the cafeteria with more open minds."

Pre-game meals prepared by the cafeteria staff—it's an arrangement that's got everyone smiling.

Athletic departments are happy because they're saving money. Coaches and athletes are pleased because they're getting good meals. And the food service staffs are glad to be part of a school activity.

"Even though it's more work for us," explained a cafeteria worker in Louisiana, "I wouldn't trade it for anything. It's fun to work with the kids. Makes us feel like we're part of the team." ☆

SALVATION ARMY PROVIDES A CENTER FOR FOOD PROGRAMS

By James A. Lonsbury

It is still more than an hour until noon, but already some of the senior citizens have started to gather at the communal dining center operated by the Salvation Army in Rochester, Olmsted County, Minnesota.

They come by ones and twos, arriving early to visit with friends or make new acquaintances.

"Some people are at the same table each week, and because they can't wait to see each other, they get here at 10:00 instead of 11:00," said Salvation Army Captain Raymond Sweazy.

Captain Sweazy is in charge of the Salvation Army Center and the 2-year-old communal dining program which serves about 100 people.

Funded by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, through Title VII Nutrition Programs for the Elderly, the program also receives USDA-donated foods.

The Salvation Army suggests diners make a 60-cent contribution, which can be either cash or food stamps, to help defray the cost of their meal. However, if a participant cannot afford the donation, a meal is still available, according to Terri Stern, nutrition program director of the senior citizens service in the Olmsted County nutrition program—the communal dining program's sponsor. And the center's staff makes every effort to ensure participants' financial privacy.

The Salvation Army kitchen prepares all meals served at the center and about 50 additional meals which are sent to two satellite communal dining rooms in smaller communities in Olmsted County.

The Salvation Army also has a contract to prepare about 50-75 diet-

controlled meals for Olmsted County's 4-year old "Meals on Wheels" program. Operated by the Family Consultation Service and financed by the United Fund, the program delivers meals to persons confined to their homes. Recipients can pay \$1.50 for each meal in either cash or food stamps.

These special meals are prepared according to the individual participant's dietetic requirements—low salt or no salt, low calorie or high calorie. Some are based on general diet, but with certain foods eliminated. The meals consist of a hot and cold pack and are delivered in insulated containers.

The communal dining and "Meals on Wheels" programs depend heavily on community participation. Without volunteer help, high labor costs would preclude such programs, according to Captain Sweazy. Three salaried employees operate the center's kitchen and dining rooms—one cook, one dishwasher and one person to pack meals for delivery. Volunteers help prepare and serve the meals and clean up.

Working with volunteers requires considerable advance planning to assure each "Meals on Wheels" participant a hot noon meal. Patricia Arnesen, volunteer service coordinator is responsible for this phase of the program. Most of the volunteers work one day each week and deliver meals to some five or six participants.

Captain Sweazy is well qualified to head the involved operations. He has served 25 years with the Salvation Army, the last 12 in Rochester. And in the past he has worked with various aspects of FNS programs.

The Captain was instrumental in

starting the food stamp program in Olmsted County. Later, when the food stamp unit had to leave its original location, he offered the Welfare Board free space in the Salvation Army Center for food stamp certification and issuance offices. However, the Welfare Board elected to pay a nominal rent.

With all these services located at a central point, the elderly, as well as other needy people, are able to easily conduct their business.

These centralized services can also reduce time necessary for certification. One elderly participant confided to Ms. Stern that he did not have the 50-cent donation for the noon meal—he had exactly 9 cents and no immediate prospects of getting more. Ms. Stern hustled him down the hall to the food stamp section where Ed Jarvey, Olmsted County food stamp officer, certified him and issued him stamps. "It took about 15 minutes, with the cooperation of all offices involved," Ms. Stern said.

The Salvation Army Center is ideally located to serve food program participants. It is on the edge of Rochester's business district where street parking is usually no problem. The neighborhood is home to a number of elderly who live in a new senior citizens apartment directly behind the center. Plans for another senior citizens apartment building less than a block away are under consideration. The Public Library and Art Center are both nearby.

Captain Sweazy provides his senior visitors with a variety of other services. Through the senior citizens services, the elderly visiting the center can have their blood pressure checked. Twice each month, a nurse or student nurse comes to the center.

The Salvation Army maintains a year-round camp in the Minneapolis area. "A senior citizens camp goes for 2 weeks in the fall," said Captain Sweazy. "The camp is used for kids and family camp programs at other times. But about 350 elderly use it for week-long periods twice a year."

The Salvation Army organizes other outings and sightseeing tours. And the center sponsors programs on subjects of particular interest to the elderly, such as social security, property taxes, nutrition and how to make

out a will. The programs are popular.

"I get someone from the social security office, an attorney, a bank official or trust officer, to come in and talk to the group," the Captain said.

The center serves many needs

through its various activities.

"This is a wonderful program for older people," one participant remarked, "it provides them with an incentive to dress up and get out of their homes." ☆



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3901 TAYLHA600A112 08013 0001
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FOOD AND NUTRITION is published bimonthly by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. The use of funds for printing this publication has been approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget through November 30, 1976. Yearly subscription is \$3.00 domestic, \$3.75 foreign. Single copies 50 cents each. Subscription orders should be sent to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 20402.

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The Secretary of Agriculture has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business required by law of this Department.

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